

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

By Roger Funk, Ph.D., Davey Tree Expert Co., Kent, Ohio

Q: Last winter many of our lawns were covered with snow mold. What is the best fungicide to apply, when should it be applied and at what rate?

A: The two most common snow molds are Fusarium blight (pink snow mold), which causes small, circular patches to develop in the turf, and Typhula blight (gray snow mold), which develops only under snow cover and produces larger, more irregular patches. Snow molds readily occur during periods of high humidity and air temperatures of 32° to 45° F. Snow falling on unfrozen ground provides ideal conditions for disease development.

A combination of fungicides will give the best results, and there are several labeled for either or both of the snow molds. We have found an application of Tersan 1991 plus Tersan SP about mid-November (before snow cover) gives good results. Of course, another application in midwinter will increase the protection, but this is not often practiced because of the expense and the uncertainty of a sufficient thaw for a treatment. Always follow the manufacturer's directions for rate and other information.

Cultural practices can help decrease the in-

cidence and severity of snow mold and should be considered where snow mold is a problem.

- 1) Remove excess thatch
- 2) Avoid succulent turfgrass growth in late fall
- 3) Rake leaves in fall
- 4) Continue mowing in fall until turfgrass growth ceases
- 5) Rake matted patches of snow mold in spring

Q: We own a golf course in southeastern Iowa. Our problem is crabgrass. What is the best product(s) to use and at what time of year? Time and money are extremely important as my wife and I do all the work ourselves.

A: I checked with Iowa State Extension Horticulture and was told that their tests have shown no significant difference between the cost or effectiveness of Balan (available only as a granule) and Dacthal. Both products must be applied before the crabgrass seeds germinate which, in southeastern Iowa, occurs about the second week in April, depending upon climatic variations. The best biological indicator in your area is lilac and the materials should be applied before the earliest lilac blooms.

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WTST
PROSCAPE

Q: Roundup is a systemic herbicide that is translocated to the root system after leaf application and absorption.

- 1) Is it absorbed by any green tissue?
- 2) What, exactly, happens in the roots?
- 3) How persistent is it in a plant exposed to it but not killed?

A: 1) Roundup is absorbed by any green tissue although green bark would absorb less material than green leaves. The Roundup label states DO NOT SPRAY GREEN BARK.

2) Roundup (glyphosate) inhibits aromatic amino acid synthesis.

3) Roundup can overwinter in plant tissues and cause injury symptoms to appear the following year, depending upon the applied concentration and target species.

Q: Is there any safe method to root prune maple trees that are continually upheaving sidewalks?

A: Maples are notorious for the upheaval of sidewalks because of surface rooting. Roots can be selectively pruned without causing noticeable injury if only a few roots are removed per season.

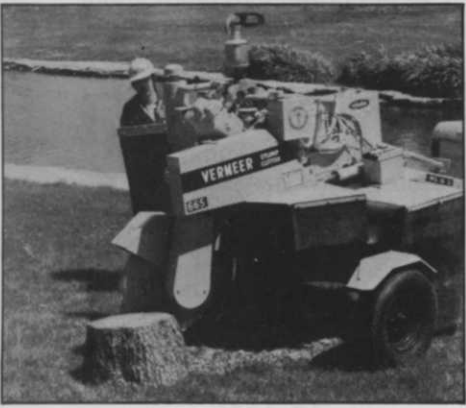
You should use careful judgement when considering the removal of large roots. Crown thinning will help re-establish the equilibrium between the roots and shoots and minimize injury. Proper fertilization and watering are also beneficial.

To help prevent a recurrence of the problem, deeper rooting can be encouraged by improving water drainage and air penetration into the soil.

Q: What is the best method of controlling bermudagrass while trying to establish zoysiagrass?

A: The best method is to treat the area with methyl bromide prior to planting zoysiagrass, but because of the hazards involved, I would not recommend it. The most practical control is an application of Roundup prior to planting zoysiagrass and periodic spot application as needed until the zoysiagrass completely fills in the area. Roundup is non-selective and will kill both bermudagrass and zoysiagrass in the applied area. I am not aware of any material that will selectively control bermudagrass without also harming the zoysiagrass.

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